2 Kings Chapter 20 Commentary

2Ki 20:1 ¶ "In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. 2 Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, 3 I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. 4 And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 5 Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD. 6 And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake."

Hezekiah is given a disease that without the intervention of God will be his death. God sends the prophet Isaiah to Hezekiah and tells him to prepare for his death by getting his affairs in order. Hezekiah turns his face to the wall and prays to God for an extension of his life on earth, because of the good works that he has done. Before Isaiah even gets out of the palace, God sends him back to Hezekiah and tells Hezekiah that he shall be healed in three days, and then he is to go to the house of the Lord. God tells Hezekiah that He will add 15 years to his life. God also tells him that God will deliver Hezekiah, a reminder of personal salvation by God, and Jerusalem, a reminder of God's salvation of the remnant of Judah, out of the hand of the Assyrians, and that God will defend Jerusalem, the city upon which God placed His name, for the sake of God's name, and for God's promise to David. Why God's promise to David? Hezekiah is the last of David's lineage alive and God will preserve Hezekiah to fulfill His promise to king David.

The thing that we see in this is that Hezekiah has failed in service to God, by not recognizing that God has accomplished His will for Hezekiah's life. Hezekiah did not ascribe the glory to God for all the good that he had accomplished in bringing Judah back to the worship of God.

However, we see another thing in "***He wept sore***" that we may conclude was good and in his favor. One is that the nation was under attack from the enemy of God, and Hezekiah desired to see the enemy overthrown before he dies. The second is that Hezekiah does not have any children and his son, who will replace him on the throne, is born after he is healed, seen in ***2Ki 21:1 ¶ "Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hephzibah***." Since Manasseh was only 12 when he began to reign; we understand he was born the third year after Hezekiah is healed.

We see here a thing we are taught in the New Testament in ***Jas 5:13-16: 13 "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. 14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: 15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. 16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much***." Certainly, at this point we can say that Hezekiah has been a righteous man. This is verified by God's answer to his prayer. Notice, the quickness with which God returned Hezekiah an answer to his prayer.

We see that Hezekiah did not rise from his bed and enter his closet to pray. Why? He is bedridden and unable to walk, so he turns his face to the wall and enters his closet of prayer in that way. What does this teach us? It teaches us, in whatever circumstance we find ourselves in life, and wherever we may be, we can enter into our prayer closet and beseech God in the name of Jesus Christ. God tells us that we have not because we ask not, and we see Hezekiah did the best he could under the circumstances, as we should do. Hezekiah's prayer was focused to God, and our prayers should be focused to Jesus. We are commanded to pray to God the Father in the name of God the Son; thus, our focus is to be on the Son, in whom we trust.

Hezekiah is given something that no other man has been told, which is there will be 15 years added to your life. He knows how much longer he is going to live. This could only be to his distress; it seems to me. We all know that we are going to die, except the Lord return before we die, and even then, we shall die in the change of our mortal bodies, but we do not live knowing that next week, or next year, is the day of our death. This we often forget, which allows us to live closer to our flesh nature, and often leads us further from the spiritual nature and

remembrance every day that our life is in the hands of God. A reminder that we are to die daily to self and thereby bring glory and honor to the name of God and our King Jesus.

7 "And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered. 8 And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the LORD the third day? 9 And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? 10 And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. 11 And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz."

Isaiah gives them the remedy to heal Hezekiah's sickness. They do as directed and he recovers. What is the significance of the use of the figs?

- First: we are reminded that we do not dismiss natural knowledge of how to heal our bodies, but we are to use every means available to us. Do not lay around praying for God to heal you and ignore the doctors and medical means of healing God has provided.
- Second: We know the boil was very infectious and had, or would, cause sepsis, infection in the blood, which would bring death to the natural body.
- Third: God gave them the natural medical use to heal the boil, the plaster of figs, but to be healed so quickly, we must recognize the miraculous healing power of God being applied.
- Fourth: Do you remember what Adam and Eve used in the garden to hide their nakedness? They used fig leaves, which were not a proper covering. God gave them a covering, which was the fruit of His labor. Here we see the use of the fruit, not the leaves, and we see the miraculous results.
- Fifth: We see the example of what the inherit sin nature does to the natural body. In the natural body sin produces death. Like Hezekiah, it is a sickness unto death, and God has sent us a message to set our house in order and be prepared to die. To be healed from the sin sickness, can only be accomplished by the application of the fruit of God, the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the divine intervention of God. Remember, Hezekiah was already a child of God but had a natural sickness unto death of which God healed him. We are already born again, when we recognize that the sins of our sin nature will bring to us eternal death. Then, God can send us the assuring message, of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Just as Hezikiah had to die naturally later: we are not freed from the death of the body, for sin. But rather, we have the assurance of eternal life in a resurrected, or a changed body, when Christ returns.

While he is recovering Hezekiah asks Isaiah for a sign that he will be able to go up to the house of the Lord on the third day. It is worthy to see that Hezekiah's desire is to go to the house of God and serve the LORD, and to give thanks and praise to God for the miraculous work of salvation in his life. When a child of God is born again, one of the types of evidence of fruit in their lives is; they desire to assemble with God's people and bring glory and honor to the name of the God of their salvation.

Given a choice of the sun going forward or backward, Hezekiah chooses for the sun to go backward by 10 degrees. Isaiah prays to God and God does this miraculous miracle. We are reminded that God, the creator of the universe, has power to make the universe do as He pleases. What else does this tell us? This tells us that God still deemed Hezekiah's prayer as a righteous prayer, and it availed much.

What does this tell us? God has given Hezekiah a message of deliverance and healing, but Hezekiah is now asking God to give him something concrete to hold onto. Don't we do the same thing after we are born again? We are always seeking to hear a message from God, which certifies to us that we are indeed born again, and that we have eternal life, and the indwelling Holy Spirit of God within us.

12 ¶ "At that time Berodachbaladan, (buh-ROH-dak-BAL-uh-duhn) **the son of Baladan,** (ba-luh-duhn) **king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. 13 And Hezekiah** (heh-zuh-KY-uh) **hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not. 14 Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and**

from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon. 15 And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them. **16 And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD. 17 Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. 18 And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon**."

Berodachbaladan, (buh-ROH-dak-BAL-uh-duhn) of Babylon (also known as Berodach) sends a letter, and a present, to Hezekiah, because he heard that he had been sick, and that he had been miraculously healed. They had also seen the sundial go backwards 10 degrees. Hezekiah forms an alliance with the king of Babylon, which he should not have done. Why? We find in ***2Ch 32:31 "Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart***." Hezekiah failed God's test by boasting, and glorying, in natural treasures, not giving God the glory. What do you mean? If Hezekiah had perfect faith in God, he would have introduced them to his great, God given, counselor, Isaiah, and shared that what he has in earthly treasures are a gift to him from God. Then he would have had no need to show off his wealth in earthly pride.

However, Hezekiah gives these messengers a complete tour of all his possessions. Isaiah the prophet comes to Hezekiah and questions him about his actions. Then, Isaiah tells Hezekiah that everything he has shown to the Babylonians will become their possession. Not only his natural possessions, but his family also. This is a reminder to us to not tell all, but to do as we are told in ***Mt 7:6 "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you***." God is telling Hezekiah that this is what will happen because of his gloating, and pride, in natural blessings.

Now we see; God has blessed Hezekiah with great natural wealth, and God is testing Hezekiah's heart. God found that Hezekiah was highly exalted in the pride of his earthly possessions. History tells us that the king of Babylon is working his way to power to throw off the Assyrian bondage they are presently under. When this happens and the Babylonians rule over Assyria, Hezekiah's earthly treasures will be given to the Babylonians, as punishment for the sin of Hezekiah. What a great warning to us today. What do you mean? Having been born again by the power of the Holy Spirit, we are given great and abundant treasures. The waring is to not go about boasting in what we have done, but rather to boast of what God has done for us. Do not take the abundant blessing of God for granted. Just as God has given them to us, God can take them away and give them to another.

The love, of earthly possessions, will bring ruin and havock to Hezekiah's kingdom and his own personal house. Hezikiah was spared seeing the kingdom of Judah being carried away, but it does happen, and it can be seen in ***Da 1:1 ¶ "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. 2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god***." There is one thing to note, which Matthew Henry points out in his commentary: notice that Hezekiah shows all the earthly things to the dignitaries sent to him. However, Hezekiah does not show them the book of the law of his God, nor explain to them that all that he has is God given. He has an excellent opportunity to proselyte these men but neglects to do so. Why didn't Hezekiah introduce them to Isaiah, who was his connecting portal to God, and the greatest treasure Hezekiah possessed on earth? We see here a missed opportunity, missed because of the pride of earthly possessions. What a great warning to us today. Let us never neglect to present Jesus, our Saviour and King, to all who visit us, and do not boast in our earthly gifts from God.

We will find later that the book of the law was lost to Israel and Judah in the house of God. They have forgotten it and it will be found again in the reign of Josiah. Thus, we understand why idolatry was so prolific in Israel and Judah. They are not reading and consecrating themselves to the law of God. A warning to us to be sure we are well grounded and living by the Word of God.

God tells Hezekiah: your sons, plural, shall be taken away and be eunuchs in Babylon. Scripture and history tell us that Hezekiah had one son, Manasseh, who shall reign in his stead. The sons, plural, are just descendants of his lineage.

19 "Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days? 20 And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 21 And Hezekiah slept with his fathers: and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead."

Instead of the future prophecy of God's judicial judgment causing Hezekiah to mourn and repent; he simply says that it is good that it will be peaceful in his days on the earth. What does Hezekiah's deference teach us? Scripture teaches us ***2Co 12:14 "for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children***." Has Hezekiah laid up that which will be beneficial to his children? No. What he leaves is detrimental to their future, and the future of the family name, which is the judicial judgment of his sin of loving money, wealth, and power. This judicial judgment will be placed upon his children.

We believe that Hezekiah's heart of pride was humbled by the pronouncement of this sentence of judgment, because he says, "***Good is the word of the LORD***." Yet, why did he not now plead to be relieved of this terrible sentence, and that his judgment would not be upon his children, as he plead for his own life? We see how bad the pride of life is in this. It did not move him to pray for this terrible sentence to be removed from his children. After all, he prayed for an extension of his own life, which was answered, and now he neglects to pray for the relief of his children from the burden of his own sin.

When we receive rebukes from God, we should humble our hearts before God and plead to Jesus for relief from the guilt of our sins, and for the salvation of our children. We are further instructed in ***Mt 6:19-21: 19 ¶ "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also***." We should not be satisfied with a curse being upon our children because of our own sins. May God help us to be faithful to Him in all things.

Hezekiah began ruling as king by setting a good example for his children and Israel to follow. However, Hezekiah did not have a child until the third year after his miraculous recovery from the sickness unto death. Thus, we see that his son, Manasseh, did not get to see his father living to serve the Lord only. He was raised up under his father's extended time which was focused on pride of earthly possessions of wealth, and the power of being king. Can you give biblical support for this? Yes.

We find in ***2Ch 32:25-31: 25 "But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. 26 Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah. 27 And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels; 28 Storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks. 29 Moreover he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance: for God had given him substance very much. 30 This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works. 31 Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart***." From this text we see that Hezekiah, being given another 15 years of life, which was wasted in pursuing the wealth and riches of this earth. We shall see in the next chapter that the fruit of this luxurious lifestyle was not what the son he was granted needed. Why? Because Manasseh turned from following the Lord and rebuilt all the idolatrous systems that his father tore down.

However, we see that God gave to Hezekiah a reprieve of judgment, because God told him the penalty would be delayed until after his death. This brings us to the question that we must ask our own selves: what are we leaving for our children? Have we brought them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? Or have we brought them up in the pride of natural life without any spiritual grooming?

One other note: Hezekiah was the son of a bad father: he was a good king, yet he was the father of a bad king. Why? Hezekiah did not set a very good example, in the extended years of his life, because he doted much upon his earthly possessions. Thus, he neglected to train his son in the ways of thus saith the Lord.

May God help us to do right, live right, bring up our children right, so their inheritance from us can be, that they be found living and serving the Lord in spirit and truth. We pray that we teach our children to lay up treasures in heaven: We pray that both we, and our children, will be firmly grounded in the Word of Truth, the King James Bible: We pray that God will give our children the gift of the new birth and eternal life in Christ, instead of earthly riches, which can distract the mind and draw the heart away from God: We pray that God will give them eternal remission of sins, and eternal life in Christ Jesus: this we pray in the name of Jesus, Amen!